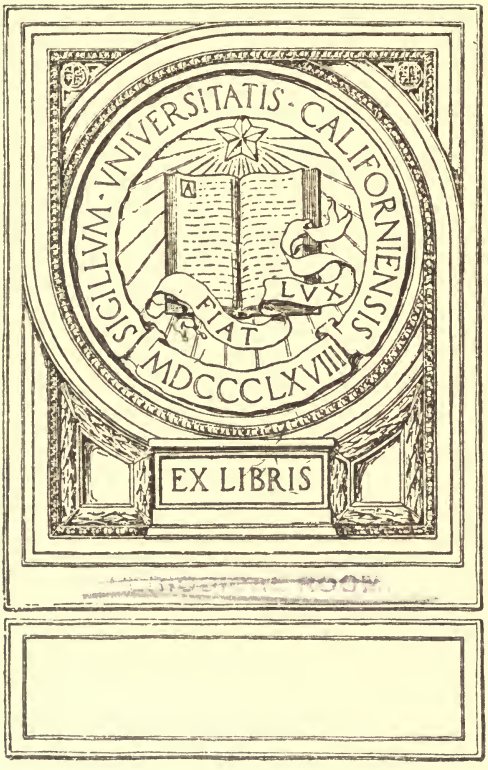
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J. WILKES BOOTH;

OR,

THE NATIONAL TRAGEDY.

AN ORIGINAL TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM A. LUBY.

BEING A TRUE REPRESENTATION OF ONE OF THE MOST TRAGICAL AND SORROWFUL EVENTS THAT EVER OCCURRED.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

A SYNOPSIS OF THE PIECE, CAST OF CHARACTERS, ENTRANCES, EXITS, ETC.

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PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM A. LUBY.

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Being Extra No. 29 of THE MAGAZINE OF HISTORY WITH NOTES AND QUERIES

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE vitality of the interest in anything pertaining to Abraham Lincoln has recently had a new proof, in the great prices obtained for Major Lambert's famous Lincoln collection, at auction in New York, and for letters and personal relics sold by various dealers. Even his inkstand, used by him from 1849 to 1860, and bearing marks of its long service, is priced at $1,000 in a recent catalogue.

It is therefore with renewed pleasure that we present our subscribers with a reprint of the second of the three plays—all very scarce—on the subject of the martyred President. This is entitled "J. Wilkes Booth"; and while much inferior in imagination and construction to the first one (*Madame Surratt*), which forms our Extra Number 20, is even rarer. We are indebted for permission to use it, to the kindness of Mr. Judd Stewart, of New York, whose Lincoln collection rivals Major Lambert's in extent and value.

DEDICATION

To B. A. Bush, my esteemed and honored friend, I most respectfully inscribe this play; and trust, that the fruit of my first efforts will be received as a token of the sincerest friendship, and a memoir of the many happy days we passed together.

W. A. LUBY.

PERSONÆ

Booth,
Davis,
Surratt,
Harrold,
Thompson,
O'Laughlin,
Payne,
Dr. Mudd,
Atzerodt,
} Conspirators.

Seward, Secretary of State.
Lincoln, President of the United States.
Mrs. Lincoln, wife of President Lincoln.
Weichman, acquaintance of Surratt's.
Lloyd, an innocent accomplice.
Miss Harris, Maj. Rathbun, } Friends of Lincoln.
Maj. Seward, Frederick Seward, } Sons of Seward.
Robinson, an attendant.
Miss Seward, daughter of Secretary Seward.
Garrett, a farmer.
Officers, friends, attendants, etc.

SYNOPSIS

This play is founded on the assassination of President Lincoln, the nineteenth President of the United States; the assault upon Secretary Seward, his son and attendants; the origin and progress of the plot; the capture of Seward's assassin, and the tragical end of him who has deprived the Nation of her greatest and most honored chief, Abraham Lincoln.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1880, by William A. Luby, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

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J. WILKES BOOTH;

OR

THE NATIONAL TRAGEDY.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A room in DAVIS' *house. Enter* DAVIS.

DAVIS. From my infancy to my manhood, I have always cherished and battled for the thought of freedom; first, I bore arms in behalf of my country, and marched to defend her against the invasion of a foreign foe. Then, when triumphant victories crowned my youthful labors in the field—when war had ceased to devastate the land, and peace reigned monarch from one end of the Union to the other—I resigned the commission which the people had intrusted to my care, intending to pass the remainder of my days in the quiet and pleasure of a happy home. But alas! I had scarcely reached that sanctuary of repose, when I was again called forth into the field of national strife. But not this time to the battle field, where thunder is but a discord to the agonizing cries of the wounded and distressed; but to the national rostrum, where dignity, honor, and integrity are supposed to be the crowning virtues of the representatives of the American people. I found there a labyrinth of fraud, hands contaminated with the most atrocious of vices, and intrigue curtained by the screen of contending parties. My first movement was to disarm the unfaithful, to raise that curtain which closed between the real and

assumed character of those whom the people were content to denominate their representatives. All was in vain, for the chains of partisans were too strongly welded together, and all the influence I could bring to bear, was insufficient to melt them. I served the people faithfully; I supported and opposed measures, according as I thought they would be beneficial or injurious to the public welfare; I guarded inflexibly the interests of my own State, but after all my watchfulness and vigilance, after all my care and relentless efforts in behalf of universal justice, the war which has been ripening through years, and which to-day crimsons the green fields of nature, could not be averted.

Enter SERVANT *with a card.*

SERVANT. Sir, a gentleman awaits you in the parlor; he bade me bring you this card. (*Handing card.*)

DAVIS. (*Reads from card*) "J. Wilkes Booth." (*To servant*) Show him into my private room; tell him I will join him immediately. [*Exit servant.*] Our cause is a noble one. We will leave the question of its righteousness to the tribunal of the civilized world; but now, something must be done, time is precious—Lincoln, Johnson, and the whole Cabinet must be destroyed.

[*Exit.*

ACT I—SCENE II.

DAVIS' *private room*; BOOTH *seated, hat in hand*; *enter* DAVIS *with a newspaper.*

DAVIS. Mr. J. Wilkes Booth, I believe?

BOOTH. (*Rises and bows*) The same, sir; and you, if my memory does not mislead me, are Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America?

DAVIS. At your service, Mr. Booth.

BOOTH. You see, Mr. Davis, I know you. A few years ago, I had the pleasure of seeing you at Washington, though with your acquaintance, I was never honored till the present moment.

DAVIS. Do you come direct from Washington?

BOOTH. Not direct, sir; I have been spending some time in the Southern States, partly professional, and with a view of rendering what services might be in my power to the States which justly claim, and are struggling for a separation from the Union.

DAVIS. Then you espouse the cause of the South?

BOOTH. Espouse it? Aye, and ever have; even from the very first, when Sumter trembled under fire of your cannon.

DAVIS. Good! such words, issuing from a mouth of one so true, so brave, and loyal as reputation marks you, will cheer a despairing heart even in the very midst of despondency, and exhilarate those who are drooping for want of comfort.

BOOTH. My intention is not to arouse the sinking spirit of a bereft people, by words carelessly strewn, or thoughts falsely uttered; not to elevate them to an inconsistent degree of rapturous delight, or place them upon a standing, from which a fall, or the least shadow of suspicion, would precipitate them into a darkened gulf of sorrow, deeper and drearier than that, from which hasty words, or careless thoughts, might, for a time, rescue them. No! my intention is to take the matter coolly; to work, without seeming to contemplate effects; to assist them, without appearing interested in their cause.

DAVIS. I feel that our cause is just. I recognized on my first entrance into Congress, that the rights of the South were being trampled in the dust, that whenever questions would arise, involving the interests of the Southern people, they would be slighted and cast aside, never to be considered again. But this course of imposition could not last forever; the Southern people were soft, but not so credulous as to forfeit their rights and interests without remonstrance. I left the Senate, placed myself at their head, and am determined to live or die with their cause. Conscience tells me I am right, reason urges me on, and the God of battles will crown our efforts with success; and the Northern States will yet

bow, in reluctant humiliation, before our grand and triumphant march into their pompous cities.

BOOTH. How goes the struggle now?

DAVIS. Not very favorable for our cause at present. The tables seem turned; but some means must be devised by which our victory will be ensured, and a speedy termination placed beyond the reach of disappointment.

BOOTH. Can you conceive of any plan by which those results may be successfully accomplished?

DAVIS. Aye, sir; plans innumerable, the accomplishment of which will place the cross-bars of the Confederation among the symblematic (*sic*) emblems of independent nations.

BOOTH. By what means then would you effect this grand result?

DAVIS. Listen! He who is prudent, guards his wisdom with secrecy; the false may come in the guise of the most ardent friend; but the penetralia of great plans are as diamonds in possession of a pauper, and, like them, will be withheld, until a price consonant with their value be offered.

BOOTH. (*Aside*) He distrusts me; he looks upon me as an unprincipled traitor, striving to elicit his foul designs! (*To Davis*) Sir, keep your plans; and if in secrecy they will work the end desired, if they will place the cross-bars of the Confederation among the symblematic emblems of independent nations, guard them, with all the wisdom of your suspecting nature, and treasure them, in the most sacred place of your ungrateful heart. I come not here to probe into the secrets of your private home, or lurk a traitor behind the guise of other faces.

DAVIS. Excuse me, Mr. Booth; but if you will calmly consider the subject upon which we speak, you will see the necessity of being guarded in our remarks, and reticent toward those with whose real character we are yet unacquainted.

BOOTH. Sir, if I have been too hasty in resenting what might

appropriately be termed a reflection upon my character, and a misconstruction of my visit here, I humbly and sincerely ask your pardon. I came to consult with you as a friend and advocate of your cause, having seen in this morning's paper an article—

DAVIS. Yes, I have seen that article myself, and was about to read it, when a domestic announced you in the parlor. It is singular that it should have slipped my memory so; yet, it is not very imperative, and probably as well that it did.

BOOTH. Is that the paper which contains the article?

DAVIS. Yes, I will read it: (*reads*) "Any person, or persons, who will secure and deliver up to the authorities of this government the person of Abraham Lincoln, will receive a reward of $50,000."

BOOTH. Have you any idea of the authorship of that anonymous and startling announcement?

DAVIS. Not the slightest.

BOOTH. Would you be reluctant to tell me, if you had?

DAVIS. To be candid with you, Mr. Booth, I think I would, at present.

BOOTH. Very well; I expected as much; yet, I declare, I must admire your vigilance.

DAVIS. You see, I might have an idea——

BOOTH. I'll take your word that you haven't.

DAVIS. But I was about to add——

BOOTH. Do you think that the announcement is serious?

DAVIS. I have no reason to doubt it.

BOOTH. Know you if the people of Richmond have any ill feeling toward Mr. Lincoln?

DAVIS. As a man, I think they haven't; but as a President, they abhor and detest him.

BOOTH. Think you that his removal from office would materially alter the present plan of operation?

DAVIS. Most decidedly; it would be a very important factor in our cause.

BOOTH. Are you in favor of removing him in the manner suggested by the advertisement?

DAVIS. I must admit that I am.

BOOTH. Could not his removal be accomplished by other means less dangerous to the undertaker?

DAVIS. Possibly, though I know of none.

BOOTH. Would you be in favor of becoming an interested party in his abduction?

DAVIS. That would depend on who the other parties were.

BOOTH. And of sharing the expenses incurred in the operation?

DAVIS. Yes, of defraying the whole, and guaranteeing the reward herein mentioned (*indicating the paper*).

BOOTH. Then, seeing that you would become a party in his abduction, provided the others could be implicitly relied upon, I will put the question as to whom you consider most competent of assuming the responsibility of so important a charge?

DAVIS. He whose mind is ever active, whose heart is with our cause, whose love is with our country; who will brave all things, even the very gallows, rather than swerve in resolution, or falter in determination; who will be awake, when his eyes are closed in slumber, and observant, when there's nothing great to see.

BOOTH. Who, think you, is such a man?

DAVIS. By what I have heard, and seen, and noticed, none could be more worthy than yourself.

BOOTH. Were I to engage to perform that delicate business, would you trust me?

DAVIS. Implicitly.

BOOTH. And if I got into trouble, assist me?

DAVIS. Most assuredly.

BOOTH. Then I accept, and swear, by the God in heaven, that he, who is now President of the United States, will, within two months, fall from his throne of power!

DAVIS. Well said, my friend; I congratulate you on your

bravery; and trust, that the oath just taken, will never be revoked.

BOOTH. While life lasts, the incentive will grow in strength; beyond that, I know not what may come.

DAVIS. Now that we have arrived at an understanding, satisfactory and pleasing to both, let us part. I have some business to attend to, and will meet you again in the morning (*starts*).

BOOTH. Hold! one thing more, ere we separate.

DAVIS. (*Stops and looks back.*) What's that, my friend?

BOOTH. A compact.

DAVIS. A compact?

BOOTH. That's what I said.

DAVIS. Not at all necessary.

BOOTH. But very essential.

DAVIS. How so?

BOOTH. In case that any misunderstanding should occur, a covenant——

DAVIS. We will waste no more time on that (*rings*).

Enter SERVANT

SERV. Sir, did you ring?

DAVIS. I would like some writing material immediately. [*Exit Serv.*] Have you any associates who would assist you?

BOOTH. Money will secure an army of them.

Re-enter SERVANT (*with materials*).

DAVIS. (*Takes them.*) That will do. [*Exit Serv.*] Will you write it?

BOOTH. If you desire (*writes*). There, is that acceptable?

DAVIS. (*Looks it over.*) Yes, there is nothing objectionable in it. (*Signs and gives it back to Booth.*)

BOOTH. Don't you wish a copy of it?

DAVIS. I will trust you till morning; I guess nothing will happen to demand it. I will expect you in the morning.

BOOTH. I will be here.

DAVIS. (*Rings.*) I will have the servant conduct you to the door.

Enter SERVANT

DAVIS. (*To Servant*). Show this gentleman out.

[*Exit* BOOTH *with Servant at* R. 2 E., *and* DAVIS *at* L. 1 E.

ACT I—SCENE III.

Hotel—BOOTH *entering.*

BOOTH. Ahem! the idea of that old cove trying to get the best of me. He did not have any idea of the authorship of that anonymous advertisement, or letter—or whatever you call it. Would he bear a share of the expenses of the job? Yes, the whole; and how ready he was to guarantee the payment of the reward. Ah! well might he speak of falsity, for it is apparent in his every act, it is stamped upon his countenance, it is mingled with his words. Falsity, the most despicable element of man, is jeweled in the virtues of the human race. He who soars with wings ofwisdom, will fall, ere his journey's end is reached; and he, who, by shrewd cunningness, strives to deceive the real actor, will only deceive himself.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. Sir, a gentleman. [SURRATT *enters. Exit Servant.*]

BOOTH. Why, how do you do, old fellow? (*shakes hands*). It is a long time since I saw you.

SUR. Yes, quite a while. I was in Cuba making arrangements for that clothing which was purchased, and which is now on its way to New York.

BOOTH. What clothing?

SUR. That infected clothing which is contemplated being sold to pawnbrokers in New York City.

BOOTH. Are they aware of its character?

SUR. Why bless you, no.

BOOTH. I feel sorry for it: I do, indeed. I can never look upon the wholesale slaughter or murder of innocent people without feeling repugnant towards those who conspire to destroy them.

SUR. But, my dear friend, you must remember the noble cause for which 'tis done.

BOOTH. Noble may be the cause—but damnable the action.

Enter DAVIS.

DAVIS. Excuse my intrusion, gentlemen, I was not aware that the parlor was occupied.

BOOTH. No intrusion at all, sir. Mr. Davis, allow me to present my respected friend, Mr. Surratt, of Washington.

DAVIS. Mr. Surratt, I am very much pleased to meet you.

SUR. Mr. Davis, the honor of your acquaintance affords me great pleasure.

DAVIS (*To Surratt*). Do you contemplate remaining any length of time in the city?

SUR. No, sir; I depart in a few hours; I am on my way from Cuba, and desire to reach home as soon as possible.

DAVIS. I regret that you cannot remain with us a few days at least.

SUR. I would be delighted to do so; but engagements demand my immediate return. Gentlemen, as I have some business that demands my attention in the city before I leave, I must bid you adieu.

BOOTH. Farewell, dear friend, we'll meet again ere long, at home; the days that elapse will be fraught with tidings of a prodigious nature; and on them, will depend the triumph of the Southern cause. [*Exit Sur.*]

DAVIS. Have you formed any plan yet as to the course of action to be taken in this matter?

BOOTH. I have; I will proceed to Washington; there I have friends, and money can secure accomplices. I will lay a plot, such as the mind of man never before conceived; and weave a web of fate around the whole Cabinet, through which they can never break. My actions shall become changed; in the public belief, insanity will grasp me; and strange or improper conduct be attributed to its effects. Dementia will act my friend; it will serve me when all others are beyond my reach. Mr Davis, I love the cause for which the South is struggling; I love to see her banner wave triumphant o'er the field of battle; I love to hear the shouts of victory pass from line to line; I love to watch the smiling faces of the loyal dead, as they crouch in sweet repose, beneath the ponderous feet of Moloch.

DAVIS. May your sentiments be ever as they are this moment, and may your feelings reverberate in every portion of the land. I will arrange with the Secretary of the Treasury so you can get the reward——

BOOTH. My labors are beyond the reach of money, and only love of country can command them. Others may crave that paltry sum you offer, but I would loathe to take it as a gift [*Exit*].

ACT II.—SCENE I.

MRS. SURRATT'S *house*. MRS. SURRATT, SURRATT, *and* BOOTH.

MRS. SUR. Mr. Booth, you act very strange since your return from the South. People say there is a very noticeable change in you.

BOOTH. Do you notice any change?

MRS. SUR. I most certainly do; before you went to the South, you were cheerful, pleasant, and happy; now you are cold, sedate, and melancholy.

BOOTH. The climate must have had an injurious effect on me; I do not feel as well as I did before I visited that section of the

country. I think I will take a trip to Canada, it is a healthy place, and may serve to alleviate that drowsy feeling which so oppresses me [*Exit*].

SUR. Mother, what do you think ails Booth? He is not at all the fellow he used to be.

MRS. SUR. My dear son, I think there is something wrong.

SUR. Something wrong? Why, mother, you don't think he's ill, do you?

MRS. SUR. Not physically.

SUR. Then you believe there is something on his mind that troubles him?

MRS. SUR. I do.

SUR. Can you surmise anything which he would conceal from us?

MRS. SUR. The disposition and character of people are as different as people themselves.

SUR. Booth has always confided in me, and if there is anything unusual up, I think he'll tell me.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. Mr. Surratt, a gentleman awaits you in the reception room.

SUR. Did he send his card?

SERV. No, sir; nor would he oblige me with his name.

SUR. What sort of a looking man is he?

SERV. If he would remain still, he would have the appearance of a thorough gentleman; but he is continually looking around, and seems to be taking cognizance of every thing in the room.

MRS. SUR. Is he an elderly gentleman?

SERV. No, madam; he is not; he is about thirty—perhaps not quite so old.

SUR. I am engaged at present, and have no special desire to be interrupted by this eccentric person. Tell him I am not at liberty to see him now. [*Exit Serv.*]

MRS. SUR. Who can that strange man be?

SUR. I don't know, though most likely a country friend.

Re-enter SERVANT.

SUR. Well?

SERV. He persists in remaining; he says that he'll remain where he is until he sees you personally.

MRS. SUR. What impudence!

SUR. My friend, whoever he is, must have some important business with me, or else he would be more reserved in his conduct.

MRS. SUR. Possibly he is some crazy person who——

SUR. No, mother, I think not; all men are not what they seem; appearance is frequently at variance with designs, and the study of human character, is a tour over the field of nature. (*To Serv.*) Tell the gentleman that I will be with him immediately.

MRS. SUR. If you see J. Wilkes again this evening, tell him I would like to see him before he leaves for Canada.

SUR. I will inform him of your desire, mother. I will now join this eccentricity below. [*Exit both.*]

ACT II.—SCENE II.

Reception room—PAYNE—SURRATT *entering.*

SUR. Why Payne, old fellow, how do you do? You are the last man I expected to meet here.

PAYNE. I scarcely expected to call on you, but the city being on my way to Canada, I thought I would pay you a visit.

SUR. And I assure you that you are welcome, and will receive the hospitality which is due a guest; and the friendship which one friend should bestow upon another.

PAYNE. Surratt, you have always been a true and faithful friend; your loyalty I will never doubt, and I am already under more obligations to you than I can ever repay.

SUR. My dear friend, trouble yourself not about things which are in themselves peaceful.

PAYNE. By the way, when did you see our friend J. Wilkes?

SUR. I saw him this morning. He has changed wonderfully since his Southern trip. He seems to have something on his mind which is distressing him beyond description.

PAYNE. Where, think you, I would be most likely to find him?

SUR. When wanted, he is about as hard to find as a needle in a haystack. He is everywhere, and nowhere; knows everything, and sees nothing.

PAYNE. But he is in the city, is he not?

SUR. I couldn't say; he was here this morning, but is now doubtless on his way to Canada.

PAYNE. Did he contemplate going to Canada?

SUR. He said he would go there, as he thought it would improve his health.

PAYNE. Is that the only reason he assigned for his going there?

SUR. It is.

PAYNE. Well, if I'm not badly mistaken, he does not go to Canada solely for the improvement of his health.

SUR. Do you think he had other reasons for going there?

PAYNE. Without any doubt, he had.

SUR. Of what nature might they be?

PAYNE. Of a nature that requires them to be kept secret.

SUR. Is it possible that Booth has become entangled in a web of which he desires the world to be ignorant?

PAYNE. Dear friend, it seems he has.

SUR. How came you in possession of such mysterious knowledge?

PAYNE. By happening to be one of the few who are destined to become famous in the history of the Confederate States.

SUR. You speak enigmatically; I am unable to comprehend you.

PAYNE. And your inability to grasp my meaning, speaks none the worse in your favor. Man must learn to curtain his thoughts by words, or the passing winds might bear them to unhealthy climes.

SUR. I am entirely at sea to your meaning.

PAYNE. And perhaps it would be better that you remain so.

SUR. Be that as it may, my anxiety is increasing in your evasive—

PAYNE. Say, rather, forbearance upon a subject which ere long will become a national theme.

SUR. May I enquire—

PAYNE. Anybody may inquire, but few are given the balm which soothes the nerves of anxiety.

SUR. Do you believe me the friend that you found me in years gone by?

PAYNE. I do, and will ever regard you the same. I once trusted, and found you true; tried, and found you loyal; and in the bosom of suspicion, put you down as a confidential friend, to whom I might unhesitatingly entrust the most delicate of secrets.

SUR. I am glad that you hold me the friend of former days, and am pleased to know that it was not through the fear of disclosure that you withheld the secret which ere long will become a national theme.

PAYNE. It was not, dear friend, but through a feeling that walls are not always without ears, or that secret receptacles are ever absent.

SUR. I credit you for your thoughtfulness, but on the present occasion, it is altogether unnecessary.

PAYNE. It is safe in the tomb, for the lips of the dead will not betray the secrets of the living; but here, where walls are to hide the presence of the living, 'tis best beware.

SUR. But, I assure you that we are alone, and will not be disturbed.

PAYNE. Then I will tell you that which is foremost in my mind. About one year ago, while Lee was meeting defeat on every hand, when his legions were falling on the line of march for want of food, and worn out by fatigue—when the soldiers, whose bravery will never be doubted, and whose patriotism will ever thrill the armies of the world, were fast losing confidence in their cause, a plan was conceived by which the whole Cabinet, President and Vice President, together with Gen, Grant, were to be murdered or otherwise disposed of, so as to leave the Federal Government without a head, in which event the Confederate troops might march without effectual resistance into their capital, and terminate the most bloody and memorable war that has ever marred the pages of history. Although this plan was conceived about a year ago, it was not perfected until very recently—about the time that Booth made his Southern trip, I believe.

SUR. By whom, and where, was this extraordinary plot originated?

PAYNE. People assign its nativity to the Knights of the Golden Cross; but those who are more intimately acquainted with the subject, are silent as to its fountain head.

SUR. Then, if people are beginning to assign it an origin, it is not a secret that demands much caution?

PAYNE. It is a secret, and it is not. In the North, few know anything about it; in the South, it is the key-note of nearly every conversation.

SUR. And do the people look upon it as an act that the world and humanity will sanction and approve?

PAYNE. Little it matters how the people regard it. The preservation of the Confederacy is the one great cry that issues from the mouth of agony in the South. Human blood crimsons the purest rivers in our land, and the virtue of the North has al-

ready crossed the meridian; and, like the sun, is sinking, little by little, and will finally disappear beyond the horizon of vice, in the bosom of the most ardent friends of the Union. The South is right. A noble cause is the object of contention. Money may draw a line of discrimination between the right and the wrong, but noble hearts will beat on either side.

Enter MRS. SURRATT.

MRS. SUR. My dear son, I—— (*perceives Payne*) excuse me, I did not know you had company.

SUR. No harm whatever, mother. Mr. Payne, allow me to make you acquainted with my mother; mother, this is Mr. Payne, an old and venerable friend of mine.

MRS. SUR. I am happy to meet Mr. Payne.

PAYNE. The honor of Madam Surratt's acquaintance affords me much pleasure.

MRS. SUR. I came to announce that Mr. Booth is in the parlor. I had a long interview with him on the general subject of his recent change, his Southern trip, and contemplated visit to Canada.

PAYNE. I would like to see Mr. Booth very much before he goes.

SUR. And you shall, old friend; come, we will join him in the parlor. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT II.—SCENE III.

A parlor—BOOTH *and* SURRATT.

BOOTH. The plan which we formed for the abduction of Lincoln is gone to the dust. It will never work. We could have no hope of successfully carrying out the scheme. It was madness ever to think of such a thing; it is folly to cherish the thought longer. I have several agents whom I engaged to assist us in that un-

dertaking; among them Atzerodt, who was to ferry us across the river. I have decided on other plans, plans which have been rumored for some time in the South, and which I communicated to you about a month since. I enlisted Payne into the ranks, but did not entrust him with the "oil," until an oath of secrecy sealed his lips from harm. We are to meet the Confederate Secretary, Thompson, in Canada next week, when the time for action will be decided upon, and the money necessary for the work, will be placed to our credit in the bank.

SUR. I was speaking with Payne this morning, and was at a loss to know how he learned of our "oil" business. He seemed to know everything from the beginning.

BOOTH. I told him all that I thought would be necessary for him to know, and what he could easily take care of.

SUR. Did you tell him that I was in the plot with you?

BOOTH. I had no occasion to.

SUR. I am glad of that, because I feigned ignorance of the whole matter this morning, and did my best to elicit what he knew about it.

BOOTH. He is a man of strong temperament, irrevocable resolution; and, if well treated, an ardent friend; but misuse him, and he is a silent viper under shelter of the friendly grass, and when least expected will sting us with his venomed fangs.

Enter MRS. SURRATT.

BOOTH. Good evening, Mrs. Surratt; take a chair. I am glad you came, for I feel very lonesome. We have been talking about the change of tactics which necessity compelled us to make.

SUR. What! did you divulge the secret to my mother?

BOOTH. I did; because there was no alternative. She suspected, and suspicion is the worst of enemies.

MRS. SUR. My dear son, there is no cause for alarm. I hold the secret, and will guard it for your sake; a mother's love will

never betray that which would be injurious to her son, though her conscience cannot approve of its commission. I would like to see the Southern cause succeed, because I think the people are unjustly oppressed; and, if there is no other way by which it can, we must resign ourselves to the consequences which will follow the act.

SUR. Mother, you do not intend to become a prominent participant in the drama, do you?

MRS. SUR. A plot without a woman is never complete. Woman can act, where man's appearance would attract the greatest attention; she can watch, where her eyes would not be the center of attraction; she can listen, where to man, all would be stillness and slumber; in short, she can do many things which would be impossible for man to accomplish.

BOOTH. Your mother is right, John; a woman's aid in the plot is indispensable. We can trust her and place confidence in her actions; we can go away from the city, and know that we leave friends behind who'll guard our interests.

SUR. If fate has so decreed it, that my mother, whose character is among the unquestioned, and whose virtue is like a lily bleaching into a lustrous whiteness as the years roll by, is to leave behind her all the happiness of home, to blanch the rosy cheeks of sister with a curse that's worse than death, so be it! All persons are masters of their own conscience, and the majority generally follow the dictates thereof.

MRS. SUR. But, my son, you forget the crime that you yourself are about to perpetrate, and which will cast a shadow equally as dark as that of mine upon the sunshine of our happy home.

SUR. No, mother, I do not, nor cannot I forget it! It has been too dear, too lovely, too pleasant, to be so easily forgotten. But necessity compels me to take the steps I do. I am entangled in a net, and its cursed threads are wound around my every limb I am inextricably bound by an oath which I value above life. [*Exit.*]

BOOTH. So the fever is beginning to make its appearance?

MRS. SUR. Great caution must have been taken in admitting members into the ring?

BOOTH. Yes, or there would have been no ring to receive them. Any combination that defies the law must be protected on every side with the utmost vigilance. He who assumes the responsibility of thwarting the hopes and ambition of a whole nation, must beware, else a few of the many may conspire against him; and, instead of rising to the highest round on the ladder of fame, and wielding the sceptre of triumph over the heads of his credulous followers, he will fall the victim of his own negligence! I have an interest in the South—not pecuniary, because money is no factor in my actions—but because I think that their cause is right; because I believe that they have been unjustly oppressed; deprived of property which, by all the laws of equity, was theirs; and, instead of receiving the sympathy of what we are pleased to term the civilized world, they were looked upon with scorn and contempt, and treated, by their own brethren at home, as slaves within the realm of a master. They were watched on all sides as spies; their Representatives in Congress were twitted of treason; the general interests of the South were being destroyed; and the only manner in which they could exonerate their names, compel the North to yield that honor due them, to show to the world that no braver, no better, no grander, or nobler souls were incarnated in human form, was to bear arms on the field where might is magistrate of right!

MRS. SUR. How strong are the Southern forces at present?

BOOTH. I am unable to answer that question definitely at this moment, madam, though I believe they are strong enough to mow down the Northern forces, like wheat in harvest.

MRS. SUR. And if they are so competent, pray, why do they not show their power?

BOOTH. Because, madam, their victory is not to be won wholly by their struggles in the field.

MRS. SUR. But they might save their men from being slaughtered like——

BOOTH. That's what they go there for, madam; and when we see danger in front of us, we can blame none but ourselves, if we run headforemost into it. This world, at most, is but a home of trouble; every man is surrounded by dangers of which he scarcely dreams; and, if by chance, one should go through its highways upon the golden chariot of bliss, we would mark him as a stranger or an alien in the land.

MRS. SUR. I do wish that the war was over, and that peace was again established; for it is so dreary, and lonesome, and sad—so horrible!

BOOTH. And if things go as we expect, the war will not last much longer. One short hour's work will close the horrible scene of a five years' struggle. Had not our plans of abduction been frustrated, by what we may be justified in calling impossibilities, I dare say, that the war would now be at end, and the frightful scenes that so shock the mind of humanity, would no longer be visible; this beautiful country, stretching, as it does, over the most envied portions of the continent, would not longer be the scene of human agony and pain—all would be quiet, peaceful, and happy; and the cradle of human joy, in which all the world is interested, would rock, in undisputed triumph, on the sacred soil of America. [*Exit.*]

MRS. SUR. Dear me, if men aren't indeed strange! [*Exit.*]

ACT II.—SCENE IV.

A room at SURRATT'S.

PAYNE. Curses upon him! Curses upon him! I would that I had never seen his face; for under the generous mantle of protection, lurks the vile element of deceit. An actor, not only by profession, but by nature; deceiving all with whom he comes

in contact, and with his polished arts and manners, beguiles the weary on the rugged road of life.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. Pray, Mr. Payne, of whom are you speaking?

PAYNE. Of one whose magic and mesmeric powers are masters of mind.

SERV. Mr. Payne, I fear that you are ill, can I do anything for you?

PAYNE. Aye, much that might be useless, but little that would change the nature of my illness; medicines may soothe the throbbing heart, or drive away the pain that's caused by physical agents, but beyond that 'tis impossible for it to go; its office is not to reach those sombre thoughts that cloud the weary mind with trouble.

SERV. Then, sir, since my service can be of no avail to a metaphysical disease, it would be better that I leave you by yourself, as the expression of unwelcome thoughts often relieve the mind, and gladden spirits that are depressed. [*Exit.*]

PAYNE. I have been a witness to many deeds, since I became acquainted with Booth, that I thought mankind could not perpetrate! I have seen crime in all its forms, from the embryo of innocence, to the withering degree of the most horrid guilt! I have watched its development from the first appearance in the bud, until it faded from the eye of man; but of all the crimes that I ever witnessed or knew, I can place none, as a parallel, by the side of one which is now in contemplation; and worse than that, I, who in all my youthful days, strove to render justice to one and all alike; endeavored to do good for my fellow creatures, assist the weary when writhing in distress—I who have fought in both the armies of the South and the North, and whose object it has ever been to raise and elevate the condition of my race,—have been brought within its cursed folds. When in Richmond, I went to a

theatre, the first that I had ever seen, and was very much attracted by the performance, but more particularly, by the pleasing and wonderful voice of one of the actors. At that time, though but a boy, I considered myself a man: I prided myself on being as good as any, and cared little for the clothes which gave beauty to the form, or the money which brought influence and power to the hand. In this condition, and impelled by this feeling, I sought and gained an introduction to the great and eminent tragedian, J. Wilkes Booth. My first acquaintance with him was a new epoch in my life. It filled me with the keenest pleasures, and thrilled me with the sweetest hopes. But our situations in life were not equal. He was rich, influential, and eminent. I was poor, powerless, and obscure; fate seemed to guide him on the prosperous road of life; while misfortune took my hand and led me on in the ecstacy of a delusive hope—a hope that seemed like a beacon of night, shining through the darkness of adversity, and beckoning me on, over the weary and desolate road, to destruction. In this condition ended our first, and I may say, not unpleasant acquaintance. He took one road, and I took another. His led up the hill of fame; mine coursed its endless way through the valley and ended in the swamp of despair; in short, his led to the castle on the rock; and mine pointed towards the hut mired in the marsh below.

I did not see him again for several years, and during the interim, poverty had crowned me with her slighted cap; I wandered a vagrant from one place to another; the breach of sociality between us grew into a shoreless gulf, over which I could not cross in safety; and finally, I became dependent on public charity for my daily bread. While in this condition, walking through the streets of Washington, with my clothes tattered, my feet almost shoeless, my stomach craving for food, and my prospects dreary in the extreme,—a friendly voice, that of my Richmond acquaintance, hailed me from a window; and, looking up, with almost an indifferent gaze, as poverty had made me friendless, I beheld the

smiling and pleasant visage of my once short friend, J. Wilkes Booth. He expressed his sympathy at my deplorable condition; but, needing agents, as I afterwards learned, and fearing the loss of a rare opportunity to secure them, he bound me with an oath, ere he relieved my agony and distress, never to forsake him in his hellish work—of which I was then ignorant. Would that I had never seen his face, for deception is veiled behind the smile of friendship; and kindly words are uttered by mouths profaned with treason! Would that I had perished in the streets of plenty, that I had starved amid the luxuries of indolence, that I had frozen among a hardened and heartless people, rather than have fallen in the toils of such as he! But now my course is marked, my duty is before me, and though the execrations of the American people may follow me to the threshold of my grave, I cannot, or will not turn aside from duty! [*Exit.*]

ACT III—SCENE I.

Rendezvous of the Conspirators in Canada—BOOTH, PAYNE, ATZERODT, HARROLD, SURRATT, *and* THOMPSON, *drinking wine, etc.*

BOOTH. (*Striking glasses*) Gentlemen, here's success to our plan, and may fortune favor us in all our deeds (*all drink and replace glasses on table*).

ATZ. Aye, sir; noble deeds and valiant men to work them. I tell you gentlemen, you can't imagine what pleasure it would have given me to have had the honor of rowing that old codger across the river. I really believe I would have been tempted to duck him, just to see how he'd act, and what he'd say.

SUR. You wouldn't be liable to hear anything very pleasing.

ATZ. You may depend on it sir, that I wouldn't listen to much which was offensive.

BOOTH. Not much danger of that; 'twould be easy enough to call him to order when he trespassed on the rules of decorum.

ATZ. But I assure you, gentlemen, I would do more than simply call him to order.

HAR. What would you do? you wouldn't dare misuse him?

ATZ. Wouldn't dare misuse him? Why, boy, you don't know me! I'm the most ferocious fellow in the country! Wouldn't dare misuse him? Why I'm as strong as a bear—brave as a lion —equal to a tiger—two tigers—several tigers.

THOM. It is too bad you lost the rare opportunity of becoming distinguished by your valiant deeds.

ATZ. Yes, but I will—

BOOTH. Soon have a chance to demonstrate the sincerity of your obstreperous words.

ATZ. And I will not be found wanting when the moment of decisive action comes [*Exit.*]

BOOTH. We can tell better when the time comes. I have seen brave men before, but when brought face to face with a danger so great as the present, they shrunk into a state of timidity which belied their magniloquent words.

PAYNE. But there is little danger of Atzerodt going back on us. I think we will find him as true and brave as his words would make him—though there is no telling what may occur to change his disposition.

BOOTH. Occur what will, we're not such fools as to place our lives in jeopardy for such as he. We have guarded the ring thus far with the utmost vigilance, and will not relax in circumspection at the very moment of our success. Our scheme is no trifling one, but it is of the deepest dye that works beneath the surface of a pleasant scene.

THOM. My friends, you are aware of the cause of our meeting here, have you any remarks to make on the subject we came to discuss?

BOOTH. Before any further business is transacted, it would be well to bind ourselves with an oath of secrecy—an oath to be silent on everything that occurs here to-night.

SUR. The suggestion is very good. Has any one an oath suitable for the occasion?

PAYNE. As far as I can see, gentlemen, an oath to that effect is altogether unnecessary. I think that we are all bound already by some oath or other.

BOOTH. True, we are bound; but that oath does not cover the necessary ground.

PAYNE. Very well, I have no objection; but if another oath will make our union more secure, and guard our secret better, then it would be to our advantage to take it.

BOOTH. In anticipation of this necessity, I drew up one that will serve the required purpose well enough (*takes a paper from his pocket*).

Re-enter ATZERODT.

ATZ. (*Anxiously*) What's that you've got in your hands?

BOOTH. We have decided that an oath, binding ourselves to keep secret what passes between us to-night, would not be out of the way.

ATZ. An oath?

BOOTH. Certainly.

ATZ. May all the saints, and all the angels, and all devils, in the kingdom of theology, come to our rescue! May He, who wields the scepter of omnipotence above us, don us with a power whereby we can maintain those which we have already taken!

BOOTH. Then you object to take it?

ATZ. Object to take it? Not I! I can take more oaths than any man—than two men—than several men.

BOOTH. And keep more than a dozen.

ATZ. Aye, sir, more than two—than sev—

BOOTH. Well, you don't know what's in it yet.

ATZ. Then we'll listen to you read it, though I don't see as it will make any difference whether you read it or not.

BOOTH. How would you know what binds you unless you heard it administered?

ATZ. God knows; He is the depository of many vile secrets, as well as hidden virtues; and I would prefer that he should keep some of mine.

BOOTH. Nonsense will have its way, so I might as well read (*reads*): We do hereby swear that we will hang together, until the object of our union is accomplished; and maintain secrecy on all transactions that may take place to-night. There, gentlemen, is the oath, you see there is nothing very bad in it, or anything that will tax our powers beyond endurance.

ATZ. (*Aside*) Nonsense will have its way!

THOM. There seems to be nothing objectionable in that, gentlemen.

BOOTH. All who are in favor of taking this oath, raise their right hand (*all comply*). Now, gentlemen, the violation of this oath is treason, and you all know the punishment of that crime. We can now speak freely, and without any reserve. We can confide in one another without any hesitation; and, as we are all interested in a common cause, unite our efforts in one grand defence against the usurpation of our liberties; for surely, it is that for which the South is struggling.

THOM. Ah, sir, you speak well! Would that all the Northern people were of a similar opinion.

BOOTH. Were that the case, the brilliant field of honor which is now before us, would not swing its golden gate upon the rusty hinge of time for our ingress. But such could not be the case; it is incompatible, since it is as natural for diversity of opinion to exist, as it is for one mind to be separate and distinct from another.

THOM. Well, let that diversity of opinion continue to exist, until it is destroyed by its own folly. We cannot stand here, like phantoms of a dream, and look, with unaffected eyes, upon the horrid scenes around us! We can not remain here, motionless as

marble, and help the weary souls that are struggling in distress. Mars may truly be represented by those who are waiting for fortune to make a change in the tactics of the North; but were I to kneel before the shrine of a higher power than man, I would prostrate my humble form, in submissive obedience, at the feet of the Goddess of Victory. My love for her is incessant—and my devotion would rise like incense from the altar of despair, at the sight of her flying trophies! So let us not be silent and lifeless as figures of granite, but let our thoughts be spoken, and our actions noted; let us help those who are in want of assistance, and if the life of one or two must be the forfeit for those of thousands, let us not shrink from the sacrifice. Many are the noble souls that fall before the range of fiery demons; nameless are the homes made desolate throughout our land; countless are the orphans who wander through the streets of pity, and numberless the widows, whose mourning drips our land in tears! Ah, gentlemen, I cannot bear it! I cannot see the scene pass like a panorama, before my open eyes in silence; I must speak, though all the world may curse me! though my words may become daggers that will pierce me to the heart!

BOOTH. (*To Thompson*) My dear friend, you are here under orders of the Confederate government, are you not?

THOM. I am, sir; and commissioned with full power to make whatever arrangements I deem necessary for our government and essential to our cause.

BOOTH. Then you have some idea of the line of operation to be pursued?

THOM. I am open to any suggestion, and would not be surprised at anything. My duty, as far as I am officially concerned is to listen to those who have opinions to offer, and choose the most efficient.

SUR. Did Davis allude to anything specific?

THOM. Not that he would urge upon you as imperative.

He seems to have perfect confidence in your ability, and trusts entirely to your sagacity and prudence for the completion of the plan.

BOOTH. Davis is aware of the method we prefer, and since he trusts implicitly to us, we will adopt the plan that we formed after the defeat of our former project—that of assassinating Lincoln, Johnson, and the whole Cabinet, together with Gen. Grant.

SUR. Assassination is indeed despicable; but yet, we must do something—we must strike the fountain head, in order to stop the flow of trouble.

BOOTH. And that flow will soon be stopped. When the blow is struck, it will be effective.

ATZ. Aye, well may you say that; for with our united force, we can subdue and conquer the entire world—nay two of them—several of them.

BOOTH. Our plan of operation is complete; the course which we are to follow, lies directly before us; nerve and energy are the only requirements for success, and those we may count upon as inseparably belonging to our association.

THOM. I possess the commission which will authorize you to employ such assistance as you find necessary, and to carry out your project to its fullest extent.

BOOTH. If it is convenient, I would like to look at it.

THOM. (*Takes a paper from his pocket*) Here it is, you will see, by reading it, the conditions on which it will be granted.

BOOTH. (*Takes and reads it*) The conditions are reasonable; I accept them.

THOM. Then you are commissioned to act as the legitimate agent of the South.

BOOTH. With the annexation of your signature.

THOM. Certainly, I did not forget it; I was only waiting for your acceptance (*signs*).

BOOTH. We are now empowered to prosecute our plans. One month from to-day, on March the fourth, and Lincoln, shall

close his eyes in eternal rest. It is getting late, our business is transacted, and we might as well return to our respective hotels. Surratt, I wish you would call on me in the morning, I want to see you in regard to this business. [*Exit.*]

THOM. Gentlemen, we might as well follow the example of our friend, Booth. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III.—SCENE II.

BOOTH'S *room at hotel*—BOOTH *and* SURRATT.

BOOTH. Surratt, I suppose you are not aware of the conditions on which the commission is granted, are you?

SUR. I have had no opportunity to become familiar with them.

BOOTH. So I thought. Well, it places at our command a large sum, to be used solely in securing accomplices to assassinate Lincoln and certain members of the Cabinet, therein mentioned. It offers us a munificent sum, when we are able to announce the exit of Lincoln from the stage of human trouble.

SUR. We will hire accomplices; pay them what we must, and get them for what we can.

BOOTH. Yes, but we must be wary, else we employ those who would betray our designs. We have men enough in our business now to execute our plans, provided we could intrust them with our intentions.

SUR. Who, think you, in our Association, we might fear to know our plans?

BOOTH. There are several in whom I would not place a very tender trust.

SUR. May I ask the names of those whom you think would become traitors to our cause?

BOOTH. The names which you demand are not mine to give. I charge none directly as being traitors, or point them out as schemers against our plans. I merely allude to them as being deficient

in that will-power which is necessary to the retention of an important secret.

SUR. But perhaps it would be to our interest that I should know those weak-minded persons also.

BOOTH. You would have discovered them had your intercourse been so extensive as mine. They are Harrold and Atzerodt.

SUR. If there is any danger of their being unable to keep our secret, we can leave them out of the preliminary arrangements, and entrust it to them only when we need their assistance.

BOOTH. Yes, I think it would be the better way, because there is no use in running any risk, so long as it can be avoided.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. A gentleman calls on Mr. Booth, shall I show him in?

BOOTH. Tell the gentleman that I am engaged, and cannot possibly see him now, though if he will call in the course of an hour I will probably be at leisure. [*Exit Serv.*] We have all the arrangements, by which we can carry out our programme to the word, with one exception. and that, the assignment of the parts.

SUR. Which is nothing in comparison with what we've done.

Re-enter SERVANT.

SERV. The gentleman is obstinate; he will not depart without seeing you. He sent his card, hoping that that would be some incentive towards admitting him.

BOOTH. (*Takes card and reads*) "Michael O'Laughlin." Impossible that he should be here at this important moment! (*To Serv.*) Show him in, and tell him that, though busy, I have always time and welcome for him. [*Exit Serv.*] He is a man I had no idea of seeing, and will prove one of our most valuable friends.

SUR. I was not aware of his presence in the city; it must be that he has recently arrived.

Enter O'LAUGHLIN.

BOOTH. (*Taking his hand*) Old friend! how are you, anyway?

It is a long time since I have seen you. Where have you been, what's the news, and how's everything?

O'Laugh. Well, Booth, you're the same old friend, as usual though I doubt my ability to respond to your questions at present. (*To Sur.*) Hello, pard., where did you hail from? It seems very fortunate that we should meet so unexpectedly, and at such a time.

Booth. Yes, it is indeed fortunate.

Sur. We will not be under the necessity of getting another in your place.

O'Laugh. I suppose you refer to my situation in the "oil business?"

Sur. Yes.

Booth. We have the thing in our own hands now; we can conduct it as we like.

O'Laugh. I don't understand you.

Booth. Well, it is simply this: Last night we had a meeting of the stockholders (you understand what I mean) and it was decided that the affair should be placed in our hands, and that we could take whatever action we saw fit about it.

O'Laugh. Of course you've decided on the project of assassination?

Booth. That we have, and are now together to choose the principals in the action.

O'Laugh. You will consider me among the first.

Booth. Yes, and assign you an honorable duty to perform.

O'Laugh. With an emolument consistent with the risk?

Booth. We have considered that, and will not be averse to reasonable demands.

O'Laugh. Have you made the appointments yet?

Booth. No, but I will proceed to do so immediately. I think that you will be able to take care of Grant, will you not?

O'Laugh. Yes, and, I think, without much trouble.

BOOTH. Surratt and myself will manage to take care of old "Abe;" we'll leave Johnson to the kind attention of Atzerodt, and turn Seward over to the tender care of Payne. I think that will be sufficient. They are the most prominent men of the Government, and their loss will be sorely felt throughout the land [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III—SCENE III.

SURRATT'S *house*—MRS. SURRATT *and* DR. MUDD.

MRS. SUR. Doctor, I suppose you are cognizant of the new plans formed for the purpose of ridding the Government of the troublesome officials?

MUDD. Well, Madam, although I am not wholly ignorant of them, yet my position is not such as would afford me so intimate an acquaintance as yourself.

MRS. SUR. True, I did not, of course, expect to find you as thoroughly versed in them as a principal accomplice—or quite so ignorant as the generality.

MUDD. Then, madam, your anticipations are, to their fullest extent, realized. I first learned of the new change a few days ago, and have since been unable to see the young leader who so ingeniously conceived the plot. The plan, if successfully executed, will certainly lead to the desired end. The Southern cause will no longer be scouted at, or condemned as one of the follies of a prosperous nation; but it will be held up as an example, before the eyes of individual oppression, as one of the most sacred causes for which a people ever fought. There is a great tendency, on the part of humanity, to asign the erroneous or defaulted side to the most unfortunate or defeated party. And, however much the South may be looked upon as in error to-day, if time only crowns it with victory, the South will be hailed as one of the most righteous nations that ever took the field. So you see the wrong, on whatever side it might have originally been, always appears with the weaker. Man

is prone to accept it as a fact, and so long as superstition continues to reign over the throne of his intellect, so long will he continue subordinate to those higher and nobler qualities which shine most brilliant in the darkened firmament of trouble.

MRS. SUR. I suppose you will not object to lend a hand, if called upon, to further their plans?

MUDD. No; anything that I have is for them to command; I will help them whenever it is in my power to do so. I am an ardent admirer of the cause for which they labor, and would willingly lose the last cent I possess, if it will, in anyway, assist them in their undertaking.

MRS. SUR. I do not think you will be expected to help them pecuniarily, however otherwise you may be called upon.

MUDD. Be it in whatever manner it may, my services will ever be at their command. I sympathize with the South because I think they have been unjustly treated; and if feeble actions, like mine can enhance so noble a cause, it will be a recompense far exceeding my most extravagant expectation.

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. Doctor Mudd's buggy awaits him at the door.

MUDD. Inform the driver that I will be there directly. [*Exit Serv.*] I would like to see Booth very much before I return home. I have some business with him, and thought it possible that I might find him here.

MRS. SUR. And well might you have fostered such a hope. He used to be a constant visitor, but of late, appears to be taken up entirely with other engagements.

MUDD. Well, it makes no material difference now, though it would be convenient, since I'm in the city and may not have occasion to come again for weeks.

MRS. SUR. I will tell him, of your desire to see him, and he will doubtless drive out.

MUDD. I am under many obligations to you, Mrs. Surratt, and if you will favor me with your presence at some convenient day. I will endeavor to repay them. [*Exit.*]

MRS. SUR. His house is exactly what the conspirators want. It is adapted to their business, and its location could not be better. It will shield them from the scrutinizing eyes of public vigilance. I will take advantage of his invitation, visit him, and make what arrangements are necessary for their reception. [*Exit*].

ACT III.—SCENE IV.

BOOTH'S *room*—BOOTH, SURRATT, DR. MUDD, *and* WEICHMAN *entering.*

BOOTH. Gentlemen, sit down and make yourselves at home. I haven't anything very amusing to offer you, but I will make it as pleasant as is possible under the circumstances.

SUR. We know your hospitality too well, old fellow, to think that circumstances would ever be unfavorable for a pleasant time.

BOOTH. Knowledge is a falsehood in the vocabulary of truth. We use it too lightly to express those thoughts that come like lightning to our minds. Reality may pass in all its forms before us, and we judge it by the garb that appears the most brilliant to our eyes. The conclusion at which we arrive, will be a natural offspring of its parent premises, and may be considered legitimate or not; as its parents are what they seem, or something else.

WEICH. I have always looked upon enigmas as the most amusing agents of a language; and if Mr. Booth continues in his metaphysical strain, we will not fail in the realization of that pleasure which he feels his incompetency to render.

BOOTH. (*Furnishing wine and cigars*) Help yourselves, gentlemen. Doctor, I would like to speak with you, will you please step into the hall a moment?

MUDD. Certainly. (*Goes, soon returns and calls out* SURRATT.)

WEICH. I would consider this rather strange conduct on the part of my new friends. My hosts might act a little more courteous, even though my presence is somewhat distressing, as it must be, since they see proper to hold a side conference. It has never been my custom to intrude upon the sociality of friends; and, if I have done so in this instance, I know not where to attribute the fault.

Re-enter MUDD.

MUDD. Mr. Weichman, I hope you will pardon me for this breach of courtesy. Booth had some private business with me; he desires to purchase my farm, but as he is not inclined to pay the price I ask for it, I have no desire to sell.

Re- enter BOOTH *and* SURRATT.

BOOTH. Mr. Weichman, I did not intend to bring you to my room, and then insult you. I trust that you will overlook my thoughtlessness. I desire to buy Mr. Mudd's farm, but he's obstinate and indisposed to sell it.

WEICH. There is no offence whatever. I was just reprimanding myself for having so inconsiderately accepted your invitation. (BOOTH, SURRATT *and* MUDD *sit around a table, Booth draws an envelope from his pocket, cuts the back out and makes marks.*)

MUDD. It runs the other way.

BOOTH. Yes, but this alley, or, rather, lane, is intersected by this one, which runs behind the house, and into the street, here (*indicating a place on the envelope*).

MUDD. You are right, I did not think of that—I will consider the price.

BOOTH. Well, gentlemen, let us have some refreshments.

WEICH. I do not wish for any—

BOOTH. Refusal to my invitation, and will not accept it,

either. Come, you must not feel that we purposely left you alone, or that we had the slightest intention to offend you by doing so. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III.—SCENE V.

MRS. SURRATT'S *house*—MRS. SURRATT, WEICHMAN *and others. Enter* SURRATT, *very much excited; rushes frantically around room, brandishing revolver.*

WEICH. Why, Mr. Surratt, what under heavens ails you? Be quiet.

SUR. I will shoot any man who comes into this room; my hopes are gone and my prospects blighted; I want something to do; can you get me a clerkship?

WEICH. I did not know you were in need of work; I thought you were making it go very well in the "oil business."

SUR. So I was, but the chief—the proprietor—the firm for which I—we were doing business failed,—couldn't accomplish—lost their—capital.

WEICH. Then I will do the best I can for you. If there is a place vacant, I will spare no efforts towards securing it for you.

SUR. I am going to my room, mother; let no one disturb me. If anybody calls for me, tell them I'm in Canada—or somewhere else—I don't care where, or how far, only not here. [*Exit.*]

MRS. SUR. Something, indeed, must have gone wrong; he acts as though he were mad—mad, did I say? Aye, mad! We must find him; we cannot leave him alone—cannot leave him with that messenger of death in his grasp. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT III.—SCENE VI.

LLOYD'S *house*—MRS. SURRATT *and* SURRATT *entering*; SURRATT *carrying two carbines, a rope, and ammunition.*

SUR. Here are those "shooting irons"; I want you to put them away until they are called for, which will not be very long.

LLOYD. My gracious, man! I cannot hide them; I haven't got any place.

SUR. I will show you where you can conceal them without any trouble.

LLOYD. But I do not wish them in the house; if anything should happen, and those "shooting irons" be found in my possession, I would swing for it, I tell you. I would—I tell you, I know I would—nothing could save me—I should die—be hanged.

SUR. But there is no danger of their being found. Come with me and I will show you where you can conceal them without any fear of detection. [*Exit* LLOYD *and* SURRATT.]

MRS. SUR. Next Friday, and Lincoln dies. I must bring a few things out here before that, so that everything will be in good shape.

Re-enter LLOYD *and* SURRATT.

LLOYD. Well, as long as I've been in this house, that's a place that has utterly escaped my notice, Why, the most wary in Washington would not think of looking between those joists.

SUR. Come, we must be going; we haven't got any time to lose.

MRS. SUR. (*To Lloyd*) Be sure and have those "shooting irons" ready to deliver at a moment's notice. They will be called for in a few days—or rather in a few evenings.

LLOYD. I will have those "shooting irons" ready—

SUR. Come, mother. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

White House—LINCOLN, MRS. LINCOLN *and friends.*

MRS. LIN. Dear husband, do you think this war will ever cease? It is so horrible, and there are so many innocent people killed, and wounded, and disfigured; and such a sombre melancholy spread over the once happy homes of the country. I almost wish

the South had won their cause in the beginning, for then there would have been so much misery averted, so many lives spared from merciless slaughter, and so many unknown and bloody graves blooming with the verdure of nature.

LIN. My dear wife, let such a thought not mature in a brain so clear as yours. Those who have fallen with the stars and stripes before them, lie in the most holy graves that God can give. They are shrouded with a mantle of glory that will never fade away; and although their names are known but on the regimental rolls from which they fell, yet they are more honored, more famous, and will live longer in the memory of mankind than those whose names are wrought in letters of gold upon the indurated throne of power! This war will, ere long, cease. The degree of animosity with which one party met the other on the field of deadly strife, is already becoming less; and the hostile feeling which was wont to lead the nobler soldiers through the labyrinth and maze of inconsistent war, is perceptibly abated. The war must soon end, for the power and determination of the North is known and felt throughout the whole civilized world to-day. No power will dare interfere to help the South in their unworthy cause; and, left to the mercy of their own resources, they will fall, the conquered-victors, of the loyal men who march beneath the banner of our great Republic! That which to-day seems slaughter and devastation—which holds the world in consternation as to the consequences, which must soon be known, will, hanging from the walls of memory, and reflected into the mystic future that is yet to dawn, with brilliant light, upon the beauties of the earth, be regarded as the most noble actions and the most sacred sacrifices that mankind ever made! For there can be nothing grander, or nobler, or sublimer in the actions of men, than the maintenance of the rights of one another, and the advocation of the principles which are dearer to one and all than life itself! The American people know but one principle, freedom, and that principle will live forever; they have

but one sentiment, the preservation of the heritage they received from the heroes of the Revolution, and that sentiment will descend with the nobility of man until he becomes as degraded as a tyrant is to-day—they have but one hope, that the grand and magnificent temple of liberty that stands like a castle of ages upon the rock of freedom, will be a glory to the land, and an unenvied gift to unborn millions. May God grant their hope, may he help them, may he watch over and shield them; and may the Goddess of Victory lead our armies in the field; for ours is a cause such as men had never before occasion to contend! It is a noble one, though rebels may pollute the word, and is sanctified by all the tender ties that makes man's life of worth. Though the fields, and the valleys, and the meadows, and the mountains, are all stained by the crimson gifts of Union soldiers, yet time will weather off those stains, and in their place will come the most picturesque scenery that the imagination can conceive; and from the trenches that mark the fields of battle—from promiscuous graves that point a finger to unknown dead—from desolated homes, where fell the props of families struggling for their daily bread—will grow a richer, a grander, a sublimer harvest than ever filled our nation's fields before!

MRS. LIN. My dear husband, you are becoming excited, let the subject drop, and we will go for an evening ride.

LIN. Your wish is my command. I will go, for I feel that the evening breeze will soothe my aching brow. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE II.

BOOTH *waiting at the north wing of the Capitol. He is dressed in a slouch suit; pants tucked into boot tops, and an old hat drawn over his eyes.*

BOOTH. Lincoln, the tyrant and despot of the North, will doubtless pass me here to-night. If alone, I play a role which fate

had never before decreed that I should act. People say that I play the part of tragic well upon the stage. Well may they, for my histrionic fame in that character is known far and wide. I have studied the passions and emotions which take possession of the soul when it is about to digress from the paths of virtue, and know full well the feelings that actuate the man who holds the dagger in the hand of crime. The time is come when the oppressor of the American people must perish. Lincoln, the violator of our sacred rights, must die, and all the principles which have grown up around him, must fall with him.

Enter friend of BOOTH.

FRIEND. Hello, Booth; what in the world brings you here? You're lost, are you not? (*Aside*) Is that Booth? It don't look like him—yes it does. (*To Booth*) Hello, I say; don't you hear me? (*Aside*) If that man isn't Booth, I'll be hanged. But why don't he answer, and why is he so dressed? (*To Booth*) Say, you fellow trying to hide, what are you doing there? Come, Booth, are you going with me? (*Aside*) Well, that's strange. I may be mistaken in the personage, but I'm going to see. (*Goes up to Booth*) Why, old friend, I was positive that my eyes did not deceive me.

BOOTH. Hem! How do you do. I have been waiting for a friend, and if he does not come before long, I will not wait.

LINCOLN *passes.*

FRIEND. My time will be pretty well occupied this evening, I fear that I cannot wait until that friend arrives, so I will bid you good night. I have more engagements than a dead man can attend to. [*Exit.*]

BOOTH. Foiled again! Curses on him! They will always appear when we least expect or desire them! To-night is the night that Lincoln was to die—the morrow, the day on which the fall of

Tyranny was to crash throughout the North! But though Minos lives to-night, by the unexpected appearance of Pylades, yet, 'tis only to meet his death upon another stage! [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE III.

LINCOLN *and his wife.*

LIN. My dear, I suppose you will be prepared for the theatre to-morrow evening? You know we have promised to attend, and our failure to do so would be the source of great disappointment to the public.

MRS. LIN. Oh that theatre! I had forgotten all about it. I wish you hadn't promised to attend; besides, I am not at all prepared, and do not see how I can possibly make ready in so short a time.

LIN. Oh, never mind your preparations or your making ready; go as you are: simplicity will ever receive a more cordial welcome than pomposity. You women are never ready—after marriage—for anything but hesitation, and if men were to—

Enter MAJ. RATHBUN *and* MISS HARRIS.

MRS. LIN. Oh here are Maj. Rathbun and Miss Harris (*shakes hands*). I am so glad to see you.

LIN. Major, how does the world use you (*gives him his hand*)?

MAJ. RATH. Not very kindly, I assure you. I have seen better times; but then, 'twas where peace was in the cradle of its birth, and the mother of tranquility sat in quiet joy beside the cradle of her sleeping child.

LIN. Miss Harris, I am exceedingly glad to see you. It gives me great pleasure to be your host, and I will endeavor to make your visit all that pleasure demands, though I am not so vain as to be wholly unconscious of my defects in the department of society.

MISS HARRIS. I have no fear, as to your inability, Mr. Lincoln.

LIN. Major, the appearance of your uniform arouses contending emotions in my breast. I love to see the blue, for it is becoming to the most graceful form, though its very presence sends a thrill of pain through my every nerve; and the cause for which it is worn, is more oppressive to my mind, than all the chains that ever bound the human race in thraldom.

MAJ. RATH. I, too, regret the necessity which compels me to wear it. But I firmly trust, that though your wise and prudent measures, I will soon be able to lay it peacefully aside.

LIN. Major, you have kindly reminded me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can say, in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain, have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated and found birth in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who adopted the Declaration of Independence. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often enquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother land, but something in that Declaration giving liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but hope for the world for all future time. It was that which gave promise that, in due time, the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. How, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world, if I can help to save it. If it can't be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I would rather be assassinated on this spot than to surrender it. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE IV.

BOOTH'S *room—Enter* BOOTH, *with knife, revolver, and spurs, throwing them carelessly aside.*

BOOTH. How vain is man, to think that power can always make him great. He who wields the greatest scepter on the earth to-day, will fall to-night the victim of his weakest foe! Power is but a name to signify the glory of the hour; and is used, generally, against the interest of those who possess it. I have no power, and glory I do not seek. I'm but one of the many, who're cast upon the world to battle with its ways; and our opinions of right and wrong are formed according to the impressions which circumstances make upon our minds. I go, to-night, to act a part that'll place my name upon the foremost page of history; that will cause it to be associated and descend with Lincoln's through unborn generations, to the end of time. Right or wrong God judge me, not man. For be my motive good or bad, of one thing I am sure, the lasting condemnation of the North. I love peace more than life. Have loved the Union beyond expression. For four years have I waited, hoped and prayed for the dark clouds to break, and for a restoration of our former sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime. All hope for peace is dead. My prayers have proved as idle as my hopes. God's will be done. I go to see and share the bitter end. I have ever held the South were right. The very nomination of Abraham Lincoln, five years ago, spoke plainly, war—war upon Southern rights and institutions. His election proved it. 'Await an overt act.' Yes, till you are bound and plundered. What folly! The South was wise. Who thinks of argument, or patience, when the finger of his enemy presses on the trigger? In a *foreign war*, I too, could say, 'country, right or wrong.' But in a struggle *such as ours* (where the brother strives to pierce the brother's heart), for God's sake choose the right. When a country like this spurns *justice* from her side, she forfeits

the allegiance of every honest freeman, and should leave him untrammeled by any fealty soever, to act as his conscience may approve. People of the North! to hate tyranny, to love liberty and justice, to strike at wrong and oppression, was the teaching of our fathers. The study of our early history will not let *me* forget it, and may it never. This country was formed for the white, and not for the black man. And looking upon *African slavery* from the same standpoint held by the noble framers of our Constitution, I, for one, have ever considered *it* one of the greatest blessings (for themselves and for us) that God ever bestowed upon a favored nation. Witness, heretofore, our wealth and power; witness their elevation and enlightenment above their race elsewhere. I have lived among it most of my life, and have seen *less* harsh treatment from master to man, than I have beheld in the North from father to son. Yet, heaven knows, *no one* would be willing to do *more* for the negro race than I, could I but see a way to still better their condition. But Lincoln's policy is only preparing the way for their total annihilation. The South are not, nor have been, fighting for the continuance of slavery. The first battle of Bull Run did away with that idea. The causes *since* for *war*, have been as *noble* and *greater far than those that urged our fathers on. Even* should we allow they were wrong at the beginning of this contest, *cruelty and injustice* have made the wrong become the *right*, and they stand now (before the wonder and admiration of the world) as noble a band of patriotic heroes. Hereafter, reading of *their deeds*, Thermopylæ will be forgotten.

When I aided in the capture and execution of John Brown (a murderer on our western border, who was fairly *tried* and *convicted*, before an impartial judge and jury) of treason, (and who has since been made a God), I was proud of my little share in the transaction for I deemed it my duty, that I was helping our common country to perform an act of justice. But what was a crime in poor John Brown, is now considered (by themselves) as the greatest and only

virtue of the whole Republican party. Strange transmigration! *Vice* is to become a *virtue*, simply because *more* indulge in it. I thought then, as *now*, that the abolitionists *were* the *only traitors* in the land, and that the entire party deserved the same fate as poor old Brown, not because they wished to abolish slavery, but on account of the means they have ever endeavored to use to effect that abolition. If Brown were living, I doubt whether he, *himself*, would set slavery against the Union.

Most, or many, in the North, do openly curse the Union, if the South are to return, and retain a *single right* guaranteed to them by every tie which we once *revered as sacred*. The South can make no choice. It is either extermination, or slavery for *themselves* (worse than death) to draw from. I know *my* choice. I have also studied hard to discover upon what grounds the right of a State to secede has been denied, when our very name, United States, and the Declaration of Independence, *both* provide for secession. But this is no time for words. I know how foolish I shall be deemed for undertaking such a step as this, where, on one side, I have many friends, and everything to make me happy, where my profession *alone* has gained me an income of *more than* twenty thousand dollars a year, and where my great personal ambition in my profession has such a great field for labor. On the other hand, the South have never bestowed upon me one kind word; a place now where I have no friends, except beneath the sod; a place where I must either become a private soldier, or a beggar. To give up all the *former* for the *latter*, besides my mother and sisters, whom I love so dearly (although they so widely differ with me in opinion) seems insane; but God is my judge. I love *justice* more than I do a country that disowns it; more than fame and wealth—more, heaven pardon me if wrong—more than a happy home. I have never been upon a battle field, but O, my countrymen, could you all but see the *reality* or effects of this horrid war as I have seen them in every *State* (save Virginia), I know you

would think like me, and would pray the Almighty to create in the Northern mind a sense of right and justice (even should it possess no seasoning of mercy) and the act would dry up this sea of blood between us, which is daily growing wider. Alas! poor country, is she to meet her threatened doom? Four years ago, I would have given a thousand lives to see her remain (as I had always known her) powerful and unbroken. And even now, I would hold my life as naught to see her what she was. O! if the fearful scenes of the past four years had never been enacted, or if what has been had been but a frightful dream, from which we could now awake, with what overflowing hearts could we bless our God, and pray for his continued favor. How I have loved the old flag can never now be known. A few years since, and the world could boast of *none* so pure and spotless. But I have of late been seeing and hearing of the *bloody deeds* of which she has *been made the emblem*, and would shudder to think how changed she has grown. O, how I have longed to see her break from the mist of blood and death that circles round her folds, spoiling her beauty and tarnishing her honor. But no; day by day she has been dragged deeper and deeper into cruelty and oppression; till now (in my eyes) her once bright red stripes look like *bloody gashes* on the face of heaven. I look now upon my early admiration of her glory as a dream. My love (as things stand to-day) is for the South alone. Nor do I deem it a dishonor in attempting *the life* of him to whom she owes so much misery. If success attends me, I go penniless to her side. They say she has found *that* 'last ditch' which the North has so long derided, and have been endeavoring to force her in, forgetting they are our brothers, and it is impolitic to goad an enemy to madness. Should I reach her side in safety, and find it true, I will proudly beg permission to triumph or die in that same 'ditch' by her side. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.—SCENE V.*

At the theatre, LINCOLN, MRS. LINCOLN, MAJ. RATHBUN, *and* MISS HARRIS—*enter* BOOTH, *unperceived.*

BOOTH. (*Aside*) Little dreams the tyrant of the danger that is near. Twice before have my plans for capture and assassination blown with the winds of misfortune. But they'll not be blasted now! No power on earth can stop me in the crime for which I may expiate my life (*shoots Lincoln from behind, jumps on to the stage; brandishes a dagger in right hand, and utters the motto of Virginia,* "Sic Semper Tyrannis.") The South shall be free. [*Exit.*] (MISS HARRIS *calls for water.* MRS. LINCOLN *sobs piteously; great commotion prevails, and* LINCOLN *is carried from the stage.*)

ACT IV.—SCENE VI.

At SEWARD'S *residence*—PAYNE *rings and the door is opened by a colored servant.*

PAYNE. I come from Dr. Verdi, Mr. Seward's physician, and would like to see the Secretary on important business.

SERV. You must call in de morning, sur; Master Seward cannot be seen to-night.

PAYNE. I must see him. I have a prescription which is very important, and will not admit of delay.

SERV. Well, sur, my orders am to let no one see the Secretary.

PAYNE. I tell you I am intrusted with particular directions concerning the medicine; I must see Mr. Seward directly; his life may be endangered by my absence.

SERV. Well, sur, I can't allow you to enter, my orders am——

PAYNE. To keep all you can from entering (*knocks down servant and passes*)

*Boxes may easily be formed in the rear of the stage, to represent those occupied by Lincoln and party at Washington. They should be draped with Union flags.

ACT IV.—SCENE VII.

SEC. SEWARD'S *sick chamber*—MISS SEWARD, ROBINSON, *and a female attendant.*

MISS SEW. Father is sleeping very quietly now; it is the first he has done so for a long time.

ROB. Yes, his symptoms don't appear to be as dangerous as they were—what's that? (*A noisy tread is heard without.*)

MISS SEW. My! what can that be? It sounds as though a madman had found ingress into the house.

ROB. And possibly you are not far astray; it really seems as though such were the case. I will go to the door and see who it is, and what's the matter (*opens the door*).

FRED SEW. (*without*) Who is coming there?

PAYNE. (*without*) A messenger from Dr. Verdi, with important prescriptions, regarding your father's medicine.

ROB. (*Closing the door*) Whoever it is, your brother has met and is conversing with him in the hall.

MISS SEW. It must be some stranger, who is unaware of the proximity of the sick room.

ROB. Very serious consequence might follow a disturbance of Mr. Seward's condition now, and I trust, for his benefit, that whoever the intruder may be, he will leave in a quieter manner than he came.

FRED SEW. (*Opens the door and looks in*) Father is asleep now, I guess we will not disturb him (*withdraws, closing the door*).

MISS SEW. I guess it was somebody came to see papa, and ——Why something is wrong——what a noise——my brother!——

ROB. I dare say is perfectly safe, Miss Seward (*opens the door; a man bleeding from wounds is seen falling*; PAYNE *rushes against and strives to force the door, which is held by* ROBINSON, *who is overcome and knocked down.* PAYNE *enters and rushes toward the bed where* SEWARD *lies asleep.*)

MISS SEW. (*Rushes to the window and raises it*) Murder! murder!! murder!!!

PAYNE. Ah, object of my nocturnal visit! Your days are numbered! your hours all short! death sends her messenger to lead you from this land of earthly care! (*Strikes with dagger, misses his aim, and loses his equilibrium.*)

ROB. (*Rises and rushes towards the bed, grasps the assassin and pulls him from the bed*) You scoundrel! How dare you! (*they struggle violently, both fall and regain their feet simultaneously*; PAYNE *strikes with his knife, places a revolver against* ROBINSON'S *face, and forces him to the floor*).

Enter MAJ. SEWARD.

MAJ. SEW. Heavens alive! who is this? Are we to be murdered by a lunatic in our own homes!

ROB. Take his knife away!

MAJ. SEW. (*Grasps the knife and struggles*) Villain and coward that you are! You would murder the unconscious sleeper in his dying bed! (*they struggle violently*; PAYNE *is forced toward the door, and, with one great effort, he releases himself and escapes. They all follow him. Re-entering, find* SEWARD *on the floor in a pool of blood.*)

ROB. (*Taking* SEWARD'S *pulse*) Great heavens! The man is dead! murdered before our very eyes, and we unable to prevent it.

MISS SEW. Is my father dead?

ROB. I fear he is (*places his ear to* SEWARD'S *heart*).

SEC. SEWARD. I am not dead. Send for the police and a surgeon, and close the house. [*Curtain.*]

ACT V.—SCENE I.

MRS. SURRATT'S *house*—MRS. SURRATT, *officers, etc.*

OFFICER. Madam, information has been received at the War Department to the effect that this house has, for some time,

been visited by, and made the resort of suspicious characters. We are charged to arrest all persons found here, and take possession of the house, so you will please consider yourselves under arrest, and make whatever preparations are necessary to accompany us.

MRS. SUR. I arrested—suspicious persons here—take possession of the house?

OFFICER. You understand me perfectly, madam, so there is no necessity for further explanation or delay. The sooner you are ready to go, the better it will be for all parties concerned.

MRS. SUR. But, gentlemen, there is some mistake—some great error—a malignant and unfounded charge which I cannot and will not obey.

OFFICER. If there is any mistake, madam, you will not be long detained; if an error can be established, your character will suffer no loss; but for the present, you can and must obey my orders. If you resist, you will oblige me to perform an act for which I have the greatest reluctance. Captain, you will please take the ladies in charge, and I will proceed to search the house for any evidence that may be accessible. (*The ladies get ready; a light tap is heard at the door; it is opened by one officer while the others stand with drawn sword and revolvers.*)

PAYNE. (*Outside, dressed as a laborer; feet, pants, and face very muddy; a pick-axe over his shoulder, and a skull-cap made by cutting off the arm of a stockinet shirt, covers his head.*) I believe I am mistaken!

OFFICER. Who did you desire to see?

PAYNE. Mrs. Surratt.

OFFICER. Mrs. Surratt lives here; she is at home; walk in. (*Payne enters and takes a seat.*) What are you doing here at this hour of the night?

PAYNE. I was sent for by Mrs. Surratt to dig a gutter, and called to know what time she wishes me to come to work in the morning.

OFFICER. What is your occupation?

PAYNE. I am a laboring man and work for my daily bread. I have been employed for some time past on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad as a laborer, but have recently lost my position, and work now at whatever I can get.

OFFICER. How long since you worked on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad?

PAYNE. I was at work there last Friday.

OFFICER. Where did you sleep last Friday night?

PAYNE. With the other hands.

OFFICER. Where did you sleep last Saturday night?

PAYNE. Saturday night I slept—I was at the—I had no money—

OFFICER. Have you any money now?

PAYNE. No, sir; I have not got a cent.

OFFICER. Where have you been since Saturday morning?

PAYNE. Saturday I was out in the country—I was helping dig a cellar for Mr. ———, I can't think of his name, it is a peculiar one. He lives at ——, on ——; I'm not very well acquainted in the city, and can't remember the name of the street.

OFFICER. What is your name; and where are you from?

PAYNE. My name is Lewis Payne, and I am from Fauquier county, Virginia. I have worked for my living since I was sixteen years old, and my father is a Baptist minister.

OFFICER. Are you a rebel?

PAYNE. No, sir; I took the oath of allegiance, and am as loyal a citizen as there is in the Union to-night (*hands him a certificate of allegiance*). There it is, and you can see for yourself that no drop of rebel blood flows in my veins.

OFFICER. When did you take this oath?

PAYNE. I — I took it on the — I don't remember the date. You see, I can't read or write, and am obliged to treasure every little thing in my memory, which I find to be a rather difficult task. I am a laboring man, and earn my living by my daily toil.

OFFICER. Mr. Payne, if such is your name, your answers are not at all satisfactory. The accounts which you give of yourself for Saturday are contradictory; you are unable to state where you slept Saturday night, and know nothing whatever with regard to the time on which this oath of allegiance was taken. You do not look like a laboring man, and your hands bear no marks of toil. Your clothes are those of a gentleman, soiled and besmeared for the purpose of disguise. The pick-axe is but another object of delusion, and the cap, a crowning cover of a neat disguise. Will you (*to another officer*) please step into the next room and have MRS. SURRATT come here a moment. (*Officer goes and and returns with Mrs. Surratt.*) Mrs. Surratt, do you know this man?

MRS. SUR. (*Raising her right hand*) Before God, I do not know this man, and have never seen him.

OFFICER. Have you a gutter to dig, and did you send for somebody to dig it?

MRS. SUR. Have I a gutter to dig? No, sir!

OFFICER. That is all I desire, you may retire. [*Exit Mrs. Surratt*].

PAYNE. I must have mistaken the name and place.

OFFICER. But more likely did not anticipate the reception which you received. Captain, wash some of the mud off this man and we'll see how he looks in his natural garb. (*Washes him*). That will do; I have evidence enough. You may now consider yourself under arrest and submit to being searched.

PAYNE. On what charge do you arrest me?

OFFICER. I arrest you on the charge of being, in some way or other, connected with the assassination of President Lincoln, and the assault upon Secretary Seward (*his pockets are searched, and found to contain a hair and a tooth brush, a pot of pomatum, twenty-five dollars in green-backs, and a new pocket compass*). I thought you didn't have any money?

PAYNE. I said —

OFFICER. Never mind; come along with us [*Exeunt omnes*].

ACT V.—SCENE II.

DR. MUDD'S *house.*

HARROLD. (*Outside rapping*) Doctor Mudd, wake up in there! Can't you hear?

MUDD. Who's there?

HARROLD. Booth and Harrold. Booth's leg is broken. Hurry up and open the door.

MUDD. (*Opens door and Harrold enters*) Where is Booth?

HARROLD. At the gate. He can't walk; come and help me bring him in. You must set his leg as soon as possible; we have a long journey before us and must not tarry on the way (*they go out and re-enter, carrying Booth*).

BOOTH. Doctor, we have "struck oil" at last.

MUDD. I don't exactly understand you.

BOOTH. I have discharged the burden which so long oppressed my mind. Lincoln is dead! I shot him to-night in Ford's theatre, and if the others have done their duty, Seward and Johnson are also men of the past.

MUDD. How did you break your leg?

BOOTH. I got caught in the damned flags that adorned the President's boxes, afterwards fell from my horse in a wild attempt to escape, and don't know in which of them it was that I received the injury.

MUDD. I will do all I can for you (*sets the leg*). There, it will get along very well now, if you don't strain it.

BOOTH. You had better hide that old boot leg somewhere, for officers will be here pretty soon, I'm thinking.

MUDD. (*Produces liquor*) Take some of this, and it will do you good (*Booth and Harrold drink*). Here are a couple of bottles more which you will not find amiss on your route.

HARROLD. I will put them some place where they will not be of much trouble to us. We can't bother with much luggage.

We must be off; we've got to reach Surrattsville before twelve; those "shooting-irons" and other things are there, which will be of the greatest benefit to us on the road. Come, Booth, let us be off; every moment we delay brings the pursuers closer to our heels.

BOOTH. I'm ready (*they carry him out*).

ACT V.—SCENE III.

LLOYD'S *residence.*

LLOYD. I feel very uneasy about something or other to-night. I am of the opinion that everything is not all right. Mrs. Surratt seemed greatly excited when she was here this afternoon, and spoke several times about having them "shooting irons" ready so that I could produce them at a moment's notice. She said they would be called for to-night (*a knock is heard at the door*). There! I wouldn't be surprised if those are the parties now (*opens door*).

Enter HARROLD.

HAR. Get me those things.

LLOYD. (*Gives him two carbines, a monkey wrench, ammunition, a rope, and a field glass*) Those are all (*helps carry them out.*)

BOOTH. (*Without*) I can't take my carbine, we had better leave it here. I will tell you some news; I am pretty sure we have assassinated the President and Secretary Seward.

LLOYD. (*As he enters*) Yes, and drawn me by my acts of gratitude into your infernal toils of crime. I have become an innocent and unconscious accomplice by concealing your weapons in my house. I have one left, and the first officer that passes here to-morrow shall possess it [*Exit*].

ACT V.—SCENE IV.

BOOTH *and* HARROLD *at* GARRETT'S *farm*

BOOTH. Those people would never keep us had we not been brought here by Confederate officers.

HAR. No, I don't think they would, and as it is, they are not over-anxious that we remain.

BOOTH. Like or dislike, we'll remain until we get ready to go; and that will be when the road is clear before us. If they only knew who we are—knew that we're the ones for whom such an exorbitant reward is offered. But they'll not find out; no, that wounded rebel scheme was too much for them (*dinner bell rings*).

HAR. There goes the dinner bell. Let us go in and do justice to the table; I feel as though I could eat more than a dozen men to-day. [*Exit* BOOTH *and* HARROLD.]

ACT V.—SCENE V.

Dining room.

GARRETT. What a horrible thing it was to murder the President! I can't conceive of a man being daring enough to enter the President's box and shoot him before his wife and friends, and then jump on to the stage where the chances of escape were so few. No, I can't; he must have been a hardened villain, and cared as little for his own life as he did for that of the President.

BOOTH. Yes! It is a hard conception to form. He must have been a "hardened villain" indeed! and if captured should receive no mercy at the hands of the law. He deserves the execration of all loyal citizens, and hanging would be too good for one so cruel and heartless!

GARRETT. They say he was an actor—

BOOTH. Actor or preacher, he should suffer for the heinous crime that has made the world sad, and that has sent a thrill of pain through the hearts of all his countrymen. No cause can justify so hellish an act, or insanity play the part of crime.

GARRETT. I agree in sentiment with you. sir, and wish that Providence would place him within my reach, as there is a reward of $200,000 offered for his capture.

BOOTH. Yes, it would be a good haul, but the amount will doubtless soon be increased to $500,000.

GARRETT. Gentlemen, I don't like to admit it, but your presence has caused me much inconvenience lately. I was in hopes that you would soon leave, and that you would save me the necessity of performing a task which is more becoming to a landlord than a host.

HARROLD. Your meaning, sir, is not difficult to comprehend; but you are aware that it was but yesterday you refused us the loan of your horse to take us to town.

GARRETT. I had my reasons for doing so. I do not desire that you should remain here longer; my wife protests to your being in the house another night, and if you do remain, you must sleep in the barn.

BOOTH. Then we will sleep in the barn, for we cannot walk to the city. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

ACT V.—SCENE VI.

GARRETT'S *barn*—BOOTH *and* HARROLD *fixing a place to lie down.*

HAR. This is not the worst bed in the world, though we might have passed the night in a more comfortable one, had it not been for that old woman.

BOOTH. Yes, confound her; she raised a disturbance in the camp, just as we were about to make ourselves at home.

OFFICER. (*Outside, knocking on door with revolver*) Booth, we want you.

BOOTH. (*Grasping his arms*) Here I am, who are you, Confederate or Yankee?

OFFICER. We are a detachment of Federal cavalry, and command you to surrender. The barn is surrounded, and it is impossible for you to escape. We have been on your trail since you crossed the Potomac, and are now rewarded by finding you.

BOOTH. And at the same time disappointed by losing me. I will not surrender, and I defy you to come and take me!

OFFICER. There is no use of further resistance; your efforts are useless and will end in your capture.

BOOTH. Then why don't you come and capture me?

OFFICER. If you do not surrender, we will proceed to do so.

BOOTH. You may begin your operations at any moment; I will not surrender, and the first man who enters here will never leave alive! Remember that! I can shoot five men, kill myself, and thereby defeat your plans of capture!

HAR. Let us surrender, Booth; they have a whole army around the barn, and if we attempt to escape, it will be sure death.

BOOTH. *Surrender?* what childish talk! Give ourselves up into the hands of those villains, who are worse than ourselves? 'tis madness! None but a fool or coward, overcome by momentary weakness, would give vent to such words of folly.

HAR. But the aspect is not so deplorable that we should relinquish all hope of escape. They but surmise that we are the perpetrators, and have no evidence to convict us of the crime. If we surrender, our chances of escape are many; if we remain here, the consequences of the imprudent act will be death.

BOOTH. Better to die as we have lived, than to change our career upon the threshold of the grave. See! they have already set fire to the barn! We must quench it, or perish in the flames! (*they try to put out the flames, but finding their efforts useless, return*; BOOTH *stands with his back against the hay-mound, a revolver in each hand, and a carbine between his legs.*)

HAR. I tell you we had better surrender! If you don't come, I go alone; I do not intend to be burnt alive when I can avoid it; or to die now for a crime of which future events may prove me innocent. I will surrender (*drops his weapons and goes towards the door.*)

BOOTH. Surrender, and let all the curses consistent with

your act be with you! Give yourself up into the hands of those Northern bloodhounds, that they may tear you to pieces before the public eyes of scorn!—they that may hold you aloft, and from the gibbet of infamy swing your worthless form! Oh, fool and coward that you are! Can you hope for justice from a set of tyrants? Can you crave for mercy at the feet of villains! Can you prostrate all the dignity of your manhood, at the trying moment of your life?

HARROLD. I can do anything to save a life which I value so much. [*Exit.*]

BOOTH. Even though you could produce testimony to clear you of the slightest guilt, they will ignore it all, hang you, and brand you with a crime of which you are innocent! All the evidence in the world cannot save you from the gallows; they will make of you a public example, that the unsuspecting eyes of innocence may gaze upon your lifeless form. (*Booth hears crackling, moves as though about to escape, and is shot through a crack from without*). It's all up now; I'm shot by one who dare not show his face, and the only thing that I regret is that I die unknown to those who charge me with so foul a crime as murder. In the eyes of man, I'm guilty of the crime, but before the God who rules above and knows all things, I'm as innocent as the child that slumbers on its mother's breast, for I consider no crime a murder that is perpetrated to save the lives of thousands.

I am guilty of no crime for which I dare not meet my God. The blow I struck was in behalf of the country that I loved, and for the preservation of the rights that are born into this world with man. Were I to live my life over again, and circumstances shape themselves as they appear before me to-day—with the rights of man destroyed and the privileges of his birthright polluted—I would follow that same course which I have already pursued; and I would strike down the tyrant who rises to usurp the liberties of the grandest and noblest people that ever gave beauty to this

barren soil. The incensed people of to-day may clothe me in their robes of malediction; but the nobles of posterity will hold me sacred as the cause for which I die. A great act, like a great work of literature, will grow in beauty and grandeur, as the passing years weather its asperity; and the crime of which I am the condemned object to-day, will, in one hundred years, be the pedestal on which I may stand and hope for glory. Life is short; it is but a ripple upon the wave of time; it is seen for an instant, like the wrecked and struggling vessel of misfortune, amid the angry surges of the merciless billows of contention, then lost to the anxious eye forever. Noble deeds will live upon the page of memory until the end of time; and contemporaries are not the jurors who should sit in judgment upon acts that will affect all posterity.

Death is the most horrid spectre that can stare into the face of guilt, but to me 'tis nothing, for I love to die and leave this world where Man's too good to dwell. (*Falls dead, and the soldiers rush in and surround him*).

CURTAIN

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